




Speech By
Jessica Pugh

MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY

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**STATE DEVELOPMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURAL
INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.25 pm): I rise today to speak to the water report handed down by the Queensland Audit Office. These reports are absolutely crucial to ensure that our government entities are operating with good corporate governance. I want to place on record my thanks to the Queensland Audit Office for their relentless dedication to ensuring that these organisations are held to high standards for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

For the benefit of the House, I point out that the Auditor-General, supported by the Queensland Audit Office, is the external auditor of the state's public sector. Every year they go through a financial audit program. They perform independent audits of the reliability of financial statements produced by state and local government entities. All of us in this House should know just how important it is that Queenslanders can have faith that their entities are operating for the benefit of all Queenslanders. The Auditor-General prepares reports for parliament and then as a committee we go through them and, hopefully in a bipartisan fashion, agree to endorse the reports.

Mr Mickelberg: Hopefully.

Ms PUGH: Yes, hopefully, member for Buderim. I take that interjection. Water is for everyone. The sectors of the Queensland economy that rely on water include, but are by no means limited to, households, agriculture, mining, manufacturing and, of course, tourism. The importance of our water assets, as members have touched on today, and the infrastructure that supports them is impossible to understate.

The Queensland Audit Office found that water entities used good financial reporting practices to produce high-quality, financial statements in a timely manner for 2016-17. Entities with issues last year put appropriate processes in place and made information available by the agreed time frames this year. The Queensland Audit Office also found that the control environment for each entity was suitably designed and effective and was able to rely on the internal control systems used to produce financial statements. The Queensland Audit Office also found that all water entities have effective end-of-year close processes to tie up their finances in a timely manner, which allows them to produce high-quality financial statements in a timely manner.

Queensland is one of the most decentralised states—I would wager not just in Australia but in the entire world—with 10 major regional cities. Our water assets have a big job to do. We know that. In the South-East Queensland corner alone, Queensland Urban Utilities has delivered 128,700 megalitres of water to customers this year—all 1.4 million of them. That is a delightful 117,110 megalitres of sewerage treated. They also have 108 reservoirs of water.

One of the events affecting revenue this year that was noted by the QAO was increased developer contributions. In this reporting period, developers contributed \$443 million. I think that is important to note for a number of reasons. First, it is great to see developers contributing to the growth in South-East Queensland in a positive way. Secondly, it means that Queensland's population will continue to grow beyond the five million mark and with that so does the demand for water.

I also want to make mention of the success of the previous Labor government's campaign around water savings, particularly in the South-East Queensland region. I recall that former Queensland premier Peter Beattie did a wonderful job around the need for all South-East Queenslanders in particular to preserve water with simple but important and effective measures like four-minute showers and not washing the car. I was very happy to not wash the car and save myself some time on a Sunday. Without the cooperation of Queenslanders with this campaign, it is very likely that water costs for families would be considerably higher and that would have flow-on effects for the speed at which we need to see new infrastructure. It was wonderful to see that the Queensland Audit office was pleased overall with the functioning of our water assets. I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this report.